

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, August 20, 2001**

Present: Glen Dey, Janet Miller, M.S. Mitchell, Trix Niernberger, Leon Robinson, and Joe Todd

Absent: June Bailey

Also Present: Tom Montgomery – Gossen Livingston PA; Chris Brunner and Bart Ewonus – Rock and Steele; Jim Armour – Public Works Department; Mike North – Law Department; Kathy Dittmer – Riverside Citizens Association; and Doug Kupper, Larry Hoetmer and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Mitchell called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 9, 2001 and Special Meeting of July 24, 2001 were reviewed and approved. The minutes of the July 19, 2001 Special Meeting were reviewed and approved as corrected.

1. **Detention Pond at Emery Memorial Park.** James Armour, Public Works - Engineering, referred board members to a map of the proposed lake site. He commented that the lake would help provide storm water drainage for the Hydraulic-paving project from MacArthur to 57th St., South. He referred to the existing channel/drainage ditch along Hydraulic and the drainage pipe under the Kansas Turnpike.

Armour stated that the Park and Recreation Department was receptive to the idea, as long as the pond could sustain fish habitat. He said the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) said that could be accomplished by establishing an 8-foot depth over at least one-third of the pond. He added that the pond was also designed to preserve the trees along the north and east sides of the area, but still allow storm water utility/maintenance access. He concluded by stating that there would be approximately a 4-1 slope around the pond (also recommended by KDWP) and that the pond would not be fenced. He asked if board members had any questions and comments.

Director Kupper stated that in addition to the drainage project, the pond would create a recreational amenity at the park. He said staff would be working with KDWP to designate the pond (in addition to the pond at the Northwest Treatment Plant) as an urban fishery and obtain State assistance to stock it.

Mitchell clarified that the depth of the pond would go into ground water so there would be water in the pond, even during dry periods. Armour responded that was correct and stated that staff has been monitoring the pond depth for about a year. Miller asked what was

currently located at the pond site and if the District Advisory Board (DAB) had been consulted on the project. Staff responded that currently the area was undeveloped woods, concrete rubble and other debris. Armour added that the DAB had expressed interest regarding the possibility of constructing a footbridge into the park from 43rd St., but staff felt that would not be feasible.

On motion by Todd, second by Robinson, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to recommend that staff continue to negotiate construction of the storm water project at Emery Memorial Park.

2. **Discussion of Athletic Fees.** Director Kupper handed out a copy of Leah Hoffman's memorandum dated 8/13/01, subject: Athletic League User Fees. He commented that the Park and Recreation Department has proposed assessing teams/leagues a \$10/per player/per season fee to help offset maintenance costs. He stated that on an average, this fee would recover less than 10% of maintenance expenditures; however, it was an amount that would still allow both youth and adults to participate in athletic programs.

Director Kupper referred board members to various maintenance costs for soccer fields located at Planeview, Southview, South Lakes and Northeast (Stryker Soccer Complex), in addition to a comparison of soccer fees from other municipalities that were approximately the same size and population as Wichita. He commented that since the City was currently negotiating with the American Youth Soccer Association (AYSO) and Sedgwick County Soccer Association (SCSA), only soccer field maintenance costs were addressed in the document. He clarified that the City provides softball, baseball and football leagues and that those fees would also be increasing, but that soccer was currently being provided by the AYSO and SCSA. He briefly explained the differences between the two leagues with regard to fees, volunteers, skill level, etc.

Director Kupper commented that staff was continuing negotiations with both AYSO and SCSA and that the final fees would probably be less than the original \$10 per player proposal. He stated that he had made a commitment to improve the quality of athletic fields and that the fee increase was part of that plan. He added that sports fees have not been addressed for a number of years and that the per participant fee was a good idea for two reasons. Namely, if the number of players in a league decreases then their fees also decrease; and, as league participation increases, fees should increase proportionately with the additional field wear and tear and higher maintenance costs. He briefly reviewed the costs to maintain the seventeen soccer fields at South Lakes, which were used primarily by SCSA. He explained that fields needed continual maintenance even if they were not being used.

There was brief discussion concerning some misconceptions regarding distribution of SCSA and AYSO league fees and how they related to the City's proposed fee increase. Director Kupper stated that the discussion provided him the opportunity to explain the City's position and provide a more accurate picture of the proposal to soccer parents and other interested parties through conversations and e-mails. Niernberger commented that as a former soccer mom, she felt the proposed increase was very reasonable.

Mitchell asked if staff had received the records (both the financial and participation numbers) they had requested. Director Kupper commented that league officials had expressed concern regarding providing player names; however, City staff contacted the national office of one organization, and was told that local by-laws could be amended to allow the release of player's names.

The general consensus was that the Board supported the proposed fee increase.

3. **Discussion of Cell Tower at Herman Hill Park.** Director Kupper referred board members to the GIS map of the proposed cell tower location on the eastern edge of Herman Hill Park adjacent to Broadway. He commented that the DAB was opposed to the idea and that there had been discussion as to whether the tower would adversely impact the proposed stripper plant.

Niernberger asked why locating the tower at Herman Hill Park was being considered and if its installation would produce revenue. Director Kupper commented that the tower fee and location were still being negotiated. He added that there was an existing tower on east Broadway; however, it appeared that the uses were not compatible. He stated that the proposed tower, to be built by Cricket, was a 125-foot monopole with multiple users. Dey asked about the possibility of disguising the tower or attaching it to an existing building in the area. He requested that the developer demonstrate that those ideas had been researched in the proposal. Todd asked if revenues would go into the Park and Recreation budget? Director Kupper responded that any fees would go into the General Fund, which ultimately provided the entire Park and Recreation budget. Miller asked if the Board or Department had developed a general policy as to how and when towers of this nature could be installed on park property. Director Kupper reported that the City Council has developed a policy. He added that staff has tried to negotiate installations around athletics fields so that lights could also be installed on the towers, which would be a compatible use.

On motion by Robinson, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to table the issue until the September meeting. It was further requested that staff provide the Board a copy of the DAB minutes where this issue was discussed.

4. **Discussion of Sleepy Hollow Park.** Director Kupper reported that there have been discussions concerning establishing a tax increment district in the area surrounding Wesley, which would assist the hospital to purchase the property on the south side of Central for their proposed expansion project. He said he would keep the Board updated as discussions progressed, and added that Sleepy Hollow Park may no longer be an issue in the expansion project. He further commented that bids have been let for approximately \$690,00 in playground equipment to be installed at twenty-one parks throughout the City and that Sleepy Hollow was on that list. Mitchell asked if Wesley would still provide new and/or additional playground equipment if park property was not required for the project? Director Kupper said that could probably be negotiated.
5. **Discussion of Grove Park.** Director Kupper commented that the project would be presented to the City Council on September 11th for approval. He added that staff has also had further discussions with both the neighborhood and National Guard concerning their participation in the project.

Tom Montgomery with Gossen Livingston PA introduced himself and Chris Brunner and Bart Ewonus, artist consultants on the project, from Rock and Steele. He referred board members to the park plan, which the Board had reviewed at previous meetings. He said one item that has changed on the project was the art element that would be incorporated into the entry sign. He said when they presented the project to the Design Council, the Council requested that the art element be changed into more of a sports theme and that it be incorporated into various other areas throughout the park such as the restroom/concession building and golf course starter building.

Chris Brunner referred board members to the new art design, logo and entrance to the park, which he stated has changed considerably from the original design. He briefly reviewed the design that included icons from golf, football, and bicycling, etc. He added that the entrance element would also have a football type wind vane. He stated that the entrance element would immediately identify the park as including sports fields. He briefly reviewed the design for the concession/restroom structure, which included a "football field" type roof motif. He also referred to the outside walls at each end of the building that depicted football play patterns with x's and o's. He said the same concept would be used on the golf starter building only with a golf motif.

Montgomery reported that construction documents were 90% complete and that they were waiting for information from Mid-Kansas Engineers to finish the plan for the irrigation system. He said the base bid included the roadway through the park and parking areas. He said in addition they had developed seven alternates that encompassed such items as the football field complex, restroom/concession building, playground equipment, picnic areas and golf area. He commented that the funds available should cover the base bid and that they may also be able to stretch the dollars to include some of the alternates. Director Kupper stated that staff would be visiting with the neighborhood group to review in-kind services and the donation of plant materials and other items discussed previously. He said the City had committed to build the road and football fields in order to get the project started.

There was brief discussion concerning the archeological test digs on the site and staff reported that no artifacts were found. Montgomery said a sewer line was rerouted as a result of discoveries on a dig back in the 1970's. Niernberger asked about the status of the Hoop City project. Staff reported that the project was at a stand-still. Dey commented that it appeared that the golf area had doubled in size from the original plan. Staff responded that the golf area had been increased in size for safety reasons. Dey also asked who would be maintaining the golf area and promoting the program. Director Kupper stated that staff has had discussions with the McAdams golf group concerning lessons. He said Park staff would mow and maintain the area unless the golf organization(s) adopted it as a project. He added that Park staff would also maintain the landscaping along Hillside. Dey suggested that WSU be asked to participate in the golf aspect of the project.

Dey expressed concern regarding the sports theme in the art element. He explained that a major part of the neighborhood discussion was to promote the park as a "community" park for the residents of entire northeast area. He suggested that one of the entrance elements reflect other aspects of the park such as picnicking, floral displays, and other items, not just the sports fields that would probably only be used a few hours a week. He said representing

the park as an entire community project would be crucial to fund raising efforts. He said many area residents would not participate and contribute to the project if they thought it was just another sports park.

There was brief discussion concerning presenting the plan to the DAB's. Miller suggested that since the DAB's were advisory boards to the City Council, that the project be presented to them prior to the City Council presentation.

6. **Discussion of Riverside Park Plan.** Director Kupper reported that staff would be presenting a workshop to the City Council on the plan tomorrow. He added that they would also provide Council Members the comments of the Riverside Citizens Association regarding funding various plan elements. He also reminded board members of the public hearing and neighborhood presentation on September 11 at Gloria Dei Church at 7:00 p.m. He mentioned that he has also had inquiries from various interested citizens and user groups concerning the plan. There was brief discussion concerning Wilson Darnell and Mann's presentation.
7. **Director's Update.**
 - **Well Pump and Water Supply at Oak Park.** Director Kupper reported that the cost estimate to repair the well and pump system at Oak Park was \$30,000, which might be funded through the Riverside Park Plan with creation of the wetlands area. He said while the "bath tub" was dry, maintenance crews would clean it. There was brief discussion concerning alternative funding. Director reported that funds would have to be taken from another Capital Improvement Project if the repair work was not funded through the Riverside Park Plan. There was also brief discussion concerning use of the area by migratory birds.
 - **Possible Land Purchases.** Director Kupper reported that Property Management was conducting an appraisal on the Hoskinson property south of 13th S. In addition, he also mentioned that the Meyer Nursery property was still on the market; however, the price tag was extremely high. He added that the property west of the Meyer acreage was also for sale. Mitchell mentioned the possibility of moving the Linwood greenhouse operation to the site. There was discussion concerning this idea and staff explained that the Linwood greenhouse operation was relatively small and that heating and cooling an area as large as the Meyer facility might be economically unfeasible. Director said the property would be an ideal location for a south side maintenance facility.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- E-mail from Buck Goodman dated 8/13/01 re: Linwood Park.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:50 p.m.

M.S. Mitchell, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary